

Attorney's Docket No. K&A 23-0584
Client's Docket No. 15032

APPLICATION

FOR UNITED STATES LETTERS PATENT

SPECIFICATION

TO ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

BE IT KNOWN THAT I, **RICHARD KRAUSE**, a citizen of
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, have invented a new and useful
HELMET NECK SKIRT SYSTEM of which the following is a
specification:

HELMET NECK SKIRT SYSTEM

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BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Field of the Invention

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The present invention relates to helmets and more particularly pertains to a new helmet neck skirt system for covering an entirety of a user's neck to inhibit debris and adverse weather from providing discomfort to the user.

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Description of the Prior Art

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The use of helmets is known in the prior art. U.S. Patent No. 5,095,550 issued to Perlinger on March 17, 1992 describes a helmet closure extending from spaced attachment points on a helmet downwardly and generally inwardly to cover and enclose a top of a user's neck in a snug fashion. Another type of helmet and neck extension is U.S. Patent No. 4,638,510 issued to Hubbard on January 27, 1987 having a protective helmet and stiff neck member extending outwardly to abut surrounding structure to restrict head movement in the event of an accident in a high performance vehicle. U.S. Patent No. 5,329,641 issued to Kalhous on July 19, 1994 discloses a generally U-shaped stiff neck protector pivotally connected at two points and hanging down from a front edge of a helmet.

While these devices fulfill their respective, particular objectives and requirements, the need remains for a neck skirt that provides more thorough coverage of a user's neck while minimizing restriction on neck movement and minimizing tight engagement of the throat of the user to enhance comfort.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention generally comprises a collar member couplable to a full circumferential length around a base portion of a protective helmet such that the collar member extends down from the helmet generally parallel to the user's neck. Thus, the collar remains in generally spaced relationship to the user's neck and permits the insertion of an upper portion of a jacket or shirt worn by the user between the neck of the user and the lower portion of the collar. The collar extends down a distance sufficient to cover an entirety of the user's neck.

There has thus been outlined, rather broadly, the more important features of the invention in order that the detailed description thereof that follows may be better understood, and in order that the present contribution to the art may be better appreciated. There are additional features of the invention that will be described hereinafter and which will form the subject matter of the claims appended hereto.

The objects of the invention, along with the various features of novelty which characterize the invention, are pointed out with particularity in the claims annexed to and forming a part of this disclosure.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The invention will be better understood and objects other than those set forth above will become apparent when consideration is
5 given to the following detailed description thereof. Such description makes reference to the annexed drawings wherein:

Figure 1 is a perspective exploded in-use view of a new
helmet neck skirt system according to the present invention.

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Figure 2 is a cross-sectional view of the present invention in use.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

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With reference now to the drawings, and in particular to Figures 1 and 2 thereof, a new helmet neck skirt system embodying the principles and concepts of the present invention and generally designated by the reference numeral 10 will be described.

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As best illustrated in Figures 1 and 2, the helmet neck skirt system 10 generally comprises a helmet 12 having a base portion 14 extending around a lower opening 16 into the helmet 12. A collar member 20 is couplable to the helmet 12 such that the collar
25 member 20 extends down from the base portion 14 of the helmet 12. The collar member 20 when in place has a substantially consistent circumference such that the collar member 20 is designed for extending from the helmet 12 in spaced relationship to a neck 2 of a user wearing the helmet 12. Thus, the collar does not provide a
30 restrictive or uncomfortable feel against the neck of the user.

Preferably, the collar member 20 is constructed of leather or a similar material. The collar member may be lined for comfort or to provide additional stiffness if desired. The leather is typically semi-stiff to resist deformation and touching of the user's neck due to wind force, insects, or other small road debris that may be likely to impact the collar member as a user rides a motorcycle, ATV or similar vehicle. The collar member is however, generally flexible enough to permit full movement of the user's neck such that the collar member does not inhibit the range of motion of the user's neck.

In an embodiment, a first fastening member 22 is coupled to the collar member 20 along a top edge 24 of the collar member 20. A complimentary second fastening member 26 is coupled to the helmet 12 for fastening the top edge 24 of the collar member 20 to the helmet 12. Preferably, the first fastening member 22 is a portion of hook and loop fastener 30 and the second fastening member 26 is a complimentary portion of hook and loop fastener 32. The second fastening member 26 is typically coupled to the base portion 14 of the helmet 12 although alternative arrangements may be employed in which the collar attaches to the helmet in another area.

It is preferred that the first portion of hook and loop fastener 30 extends a full length along the top edge 24 of the collar member 20 and the second portion of hook and loop fastener 32 extends along a full length of the base portion 14 of the helmet 12 to provide a continuous connection around the entirety of the base portion 14.

The collar member 20 is preferably an elongated piece of material 40 having opposite ends 42,44. The opposite ends 42,44 are couplable together to form the collar member 20 into an annular shape positionable around the neck 2 of the user. A closure means 5 46 for coupling the opposite ends 42,44 of the collar member 20 is provided. Preferably, the closure means 46 comprises complimentary portions of hook and loop fastener 48 coupled to the opposite ends 42,44 of the collar member 20. This provides for some adjustment of the collar member to allow some variation in 10 circumference along the length of the collar member for additional comfort or to accommodate positioning of clothing or the like between the collar member and the neck of the user.

In use, the collar member is attached to the helmet before or 15 after the user puts on the helmet. The collar is secured to the helmet such that the collar extends loosely down around the neck of the user and substantially covers an entirety of the neck of the user. The collar member is positioned over any clothing that may be on the neck of the user and typically extends down fully to a point 20 touching the shoulders (or clothing covering the shoulders) of the user. Inherent stiffness in the collar member and attachment to the helmet along a full length of the base portion of the helmet protects the neck of the user from debris, precipitation, and wind.

25 With respect to the above description then, it is to be realized that the optimum dimensional relationships for the parts of the invention, to include variations in size, materials, shape, form, function and manner of operation, assembly and use, are deemed readily apparent and obvious to one skilled in the art, and all 30 equivalent relationships to those illustrated in the drawings and

described in the specification are intended to be encompassed by the present invention.

Therefore, the foregoing is considered as illustrative only of
5 the principles of the invention. Further, since numerous
modifications and changes will readily occur to those skilled in the
art, it is not desired to limit the invention to the exact construction
and operation shown and described, and accordingly, all suitable
modifications and equivalents may be resorted to, falling within the
10 scope of the invention.